

REMARKS

With the above amendments, claims 1-7, 9-16, and 18-26 remain in the application and stand rejected. Claims 1-7, 9-16, and 21-26 have been amended to more distinctly claim embodiments of the invention. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments as they place the claims in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections

In the last office action, the earlier rejections based on the Carmichael, Sarmast, and Osborne references were maintained because claim limitations relating to integrated circuit fabrication were deemed as "intended use," and were thus given no patentable weight. Applicants respectfully disagree because the aforementioned claim limitations provide structural differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. Nevertheless, to expedite prosecution, the claims have been amended to specifically recite structural elements were appropriate.

As previously noted, Carmichael, Sarmast, and Osborne are concerned with paper printing, not integrated circuit fabrication. It is respectfully submitted that paper printing is very different from integrated circuit fabrication. An apparatus for sensing droplet characteristics in an integrated circuit manufacturing equipment and accompanying benefits are taught in the present application, not in Carmichael, Sarmast, Osborne or their combinations. For example, the present application discloses how a droplet sensor may be used to calibrate nozzles in an integrated circuit manufacturing equipment to achieve film uniformity on a wafer. The aforementioned cited references do not teach or suggest calibration of nozzles to achieve drop uniformity, let alone achieving film uniformity in an integrated circuit fabrication process.

Conclusion

For at least the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-7, 9-16, and 18-26 are in condition for allowance. If the next communication is other than a Notice Of Allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (408)436-2112.

Docket No. I0001.001500
Response To Final Office Action
August 22, 2003

If for any reason an insufficient fee has been paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the insufficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-2427.

Respectfully submitted,
Henner W. Meinholt et al.

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Patrick Benedict

Patrick D. Benedicto, Reg. No. 40,909
Okamoto & Benedicto LLP
P.O. Box 641330
San Jose, CA 95164
Tel.: (408)436-2110
Fax.: (408)436-2114

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